

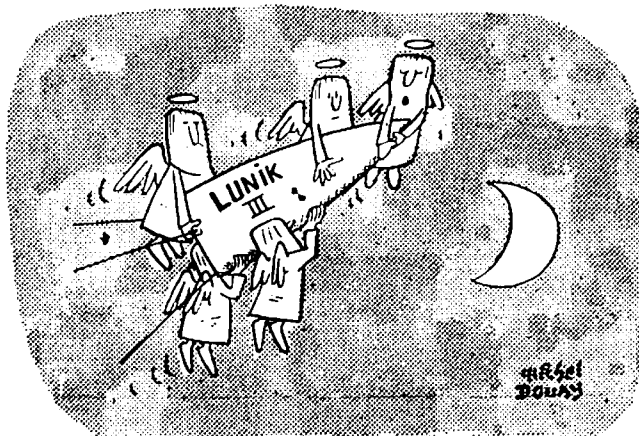
• Abroad •

Tel Aviv, Israel. Israel has been plunged into gloom by sudden closing of the Renault operation—an event that seems to be a concentrated symbol of the infinite complexity and delicacy of Middle Eastern politics. In 1955, on the initiative of the Israeli government, Renault signed a contract with a subsidiary of Kaiser-Frazer (US) for the annual assembly in Israel of 2,000 Renault cars (Dauphine and Billancourt models). When production got going, the Arab League, in keeping with its general though not always implemented policy, threatened a total boycott of Renault cars in Arab countries. Last month Renault cancelled the Israel-KF contract. Lamentable enough. But the Renault firm is owned by the French government. Does this then mean a basic shift in the policy of France, which—with good evidence ranging from *Mystère* jets to political backing in the touchiest disputes—Israel has regarded as her closest international friend? And as final fillip: the head of Renault is a Jew—named Dreyfus.

Godesburg, German Federal Republic. Commentators have interpreted the repudiation of orthodox Marxism by the recent convention of the German Social Democratic Party as a victory for the pro-Western faction headed by Willy Brandt, mayor of stalwart Berlin. Analysis makes this doubtful. It was the powerless sectarian old-fogies who tried to resist the dumping of the old rhetoric. (In the final vote only 16—against 340—stood fast against the new program.) But the appeasers, fellow travelers and Soviet agents, led by the ambiguous Herbert Wehner, joined in support of the New Look. Their turn came on foreign policy. Though accepting a nominal resolution approving “national defense,” the convention called for “inclusion of Germany in a European zone of *détente*” (i.e., a neutralist zone), withdrawal of all “foreign troops,” and prohibition of the manufacture, placement or use of nuclear weapons on German territory.

Bordeaux, France. The general assembly of the *Union des Grands Crus Classés*—Supreme Court of oenology—has been rocked this year by two issues. First is the proposal to revise and simplify the 1855 classification of the great wines of the Médoc (which accepted 61 separate *châteaux*, many of them now altered in ownership or quality of product: in 1855 only Haut-Brion, Margaux, Latour, and Lafite were in the first echelon, with even Mouton Rothschild placed among the second *crus*). Oenophiles shudder at the thought of the tensions and bitterness that reclassification must inevitably cause. Second is the shocking fate of this year's vintage, which was bought up by speculators last spring before grapes had even appeared on the vines, instead of at the classically approved first tasting at the *châteaux*, six months after harvest. With the superb wine-growing weather this summer, the speculators have cleaned up; they are at present taking their 100 per cent profit. This will mean formidable consumer

prices when the *tonneaux* of vintage 1959 are bottled and marketed in 1962. Some of the knowing *courtiers* (wine brokers) will tell you that it is in any case foolish to buy the name-years since, like Big Names in every field today, their prices have been run up beyond any rational proportion. The great *châteaux*, they say, never bottle an inferior wine—it would ruin their standing as well as their pride—so the real bargains are in their off-year output.



“If the Russians only knew the trouble they’re making for us!”

Kiev, Ukraine. The “survivals of religious prejudices in the minds of the people” seem, in spite of forty years of unceasing struggle against them, to be ineradicable. Among the non-Moslem nations, Ukraine and Moldavia—as their official press makes clear—are particularly notable for the stubbornness of their “prejudices.” The authorities are compelled to seek more and more varied types of anti-religious indoctrination. *Est et Ouest* reports that, beginning with the 1958-59 school year, a new course in “Fundamentals of Atheism” has been made compulsory for all high schools and colleges—scientific and technical as well as liberal arts. The political emphasis in the Marxism-Leninism courses left insufficient time for direct anti-religious indoctrination. “Fundamentals of Atheism” is organized around nine themes: opposition of science and religion; study of the origin of religion; origin and social principles of Christianity; reactionary nature of Catholicism; critique of Orthodox ideology; religious sects and their reactionary role; Judaism, Buddhism, Islam; attitude of the Party and the Soviet state toward religion and the Church; forms and methods of the scientific teaching of atheism.

Milan, Italy. The conservative magazine, *Il Borghese*, reports: “According to a story in wide circulation in Rome’s diplomatic circles, the U.S. Department of State would be hard put to it to reconstruct exactly what occurred at Camp David during the confidential talks between Eisenhower and Khrushchev. The two great heads of state were alone, accompanied only by a Russian interpreter. According to the rumor, it turns out that General Eisenhower, who everyone knows is suffering from arteriosclerosis, no longer recalls just what was said and discussed, and limits himself to the most general account.”

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